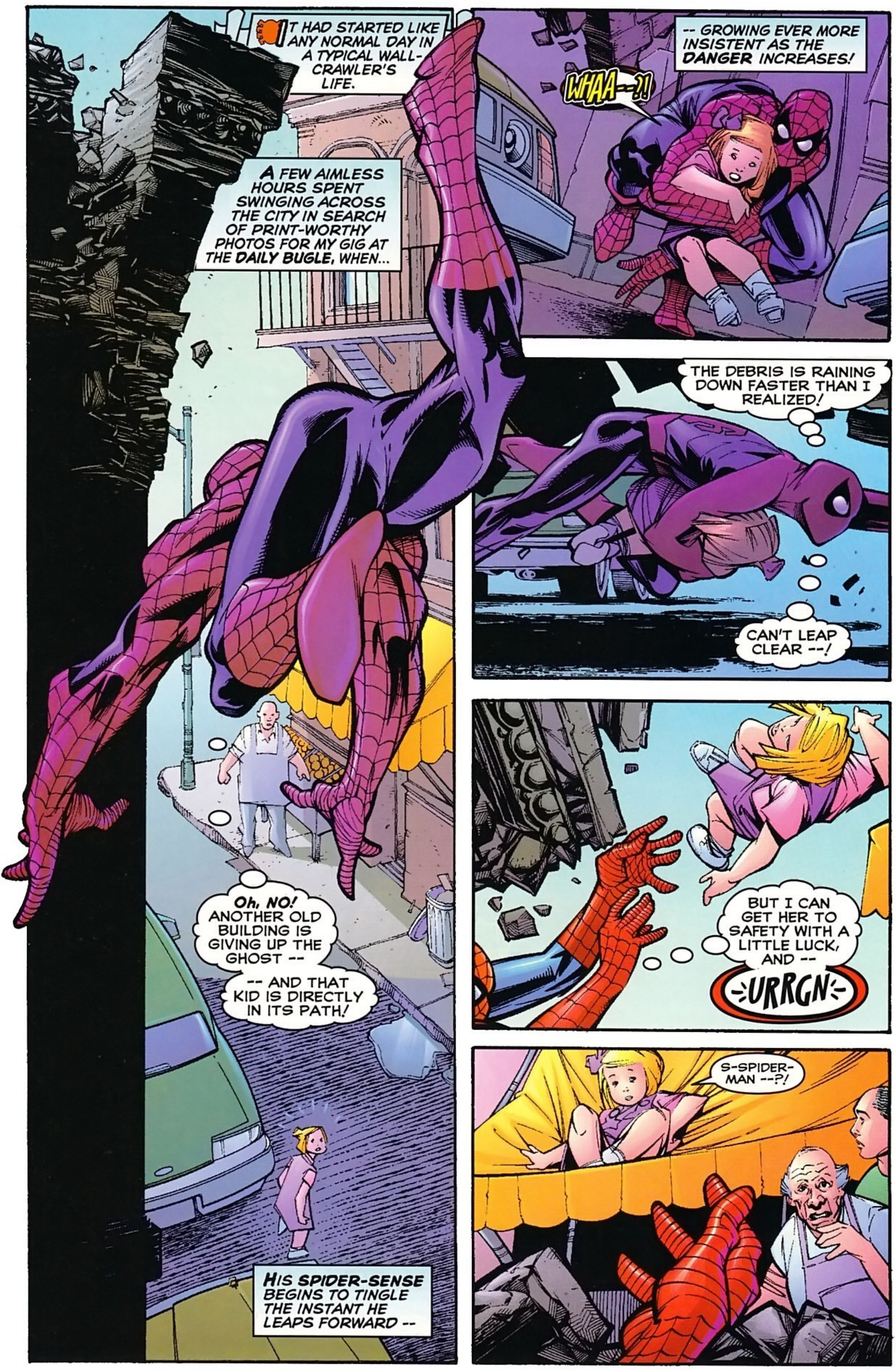
WIZARD
NO. 1/2
MARVEL COMICS
SPIDER-MAN
LEONARDI + ANIBAL '98


IT HAD STARTED LIKE ANY NORMAL DAY IN A TYPICAL WALL-CRAWLER'S LIFE.
A FEW AIMLESS HOURS SPENT SWINGING ACROSS THE CITY IN SEARCH OF PRINT-WORTHY PHOTOS FOR MY GIG AT THE DAILY BUGLE, WHEN...
WHAA--?!
-- GROWING EVER MORE INSISTENT AS THE DANGER INCREASES!
THE DEBRIS IS RAINING DOWN FASTER THAN I REALIZED!
CAN'T LEAP CLEAR --!
Oh, NO! ANOTHER OLD BUILDING IS GIVING UP THE GHOST --
-- AND THAT KID IS DIRECTLY IN ITS PATH!
HIS SPIDER-SENSE BEGINS TO TINGLE THE INSTANT HE LEAPS FORWARD --
BUT I CAN GET HER TO SAFETY WITH A LITTLE LUCK, AND --
URRGN
S-SPIDER-MAN --?!

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YOU THINK I WANT TO BE HERE?

FRANKLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE -- DECAYING IN THE GROUND, OR WATCHING THE WORLD MOVE ON.

PEOPLE MOURN FOR A WHILE, AND THEN GET BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF LIVING.

I WONDER HOW LONG YOUR WIFE WILL WAIT BEFORE ***SHE*** STARTS DATING AGAIN?

TRUST ME -- A WOMAN LIKE THAT DOESN'T STAY LONELY FOR LONG!

SOOO...

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

WE TAKE A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE, SLOWING DOWN FOR ALL THE ***POTHOLES*** IN YOUR LIFE.

"REMEMBER YOUR GLORY DAYS IN HIGH SCHOOL? ***TALK ABOUT GEEK CITY!*** YOU WERE HARDLY THE BIGGEST MAN ON CAMPUS, PETEY, M'BOY!

SHOULD WE INVITE PARKER TO THE DANCE?

ARE YOU KIDDING? HE'S MIDTOWN HIGH'S ONLY PROFESSIONAL PARIAH!

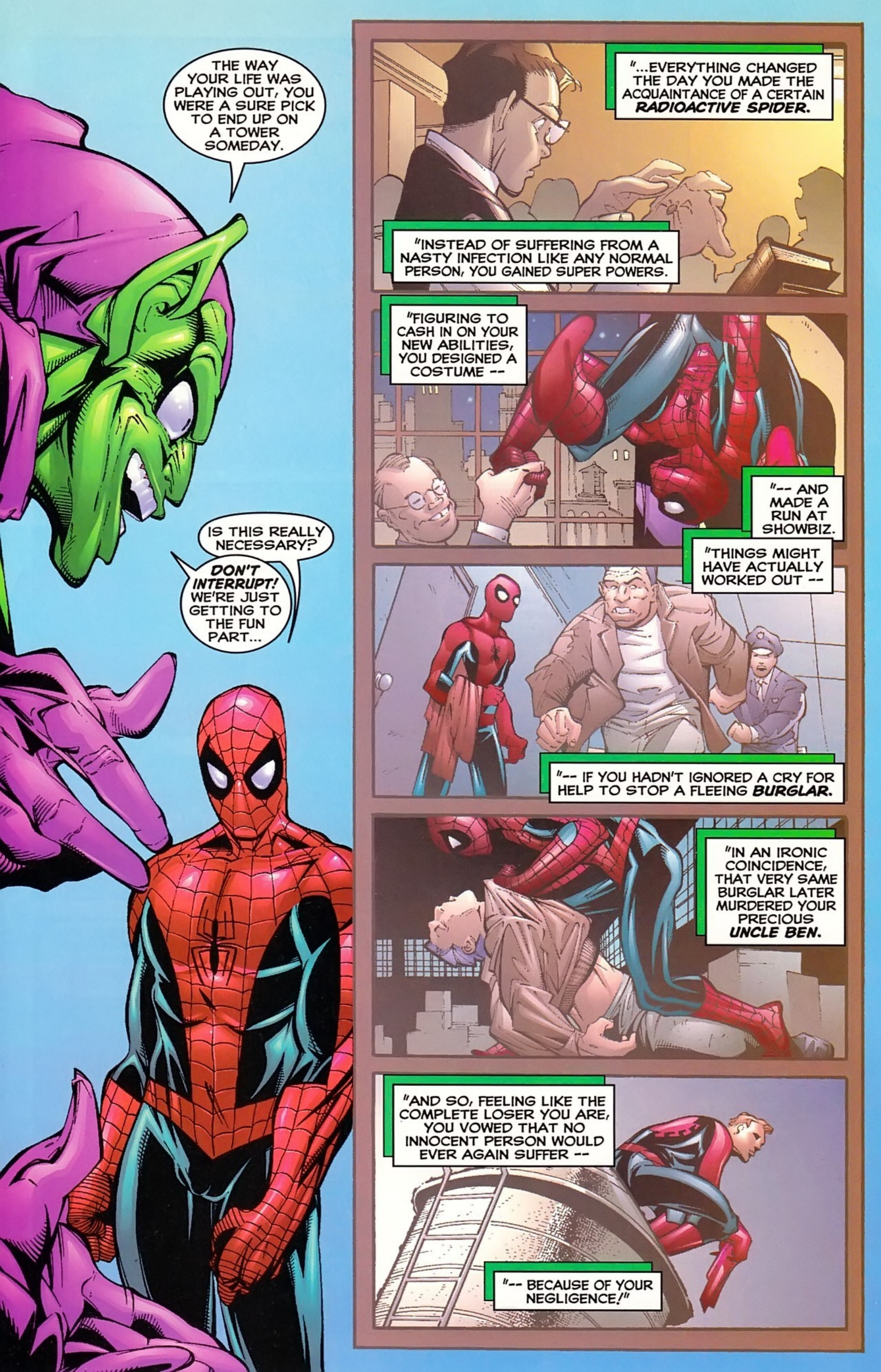
"OKAY, SO MAYBE THE OTHER KIDS HAD LITTLE USE FOR YOU. I HEAR YOU WERE PRETTY POPULAR WITH THOSE CREEPY OLD FOGIES WHO RAISED YOU -- YOUR ***UNCLE BEN*** AND ***AUNT MAY!***

I COOKED YOUR FAVORITE BREAKFAST, PETEY -- ***WHEATCAKES!***

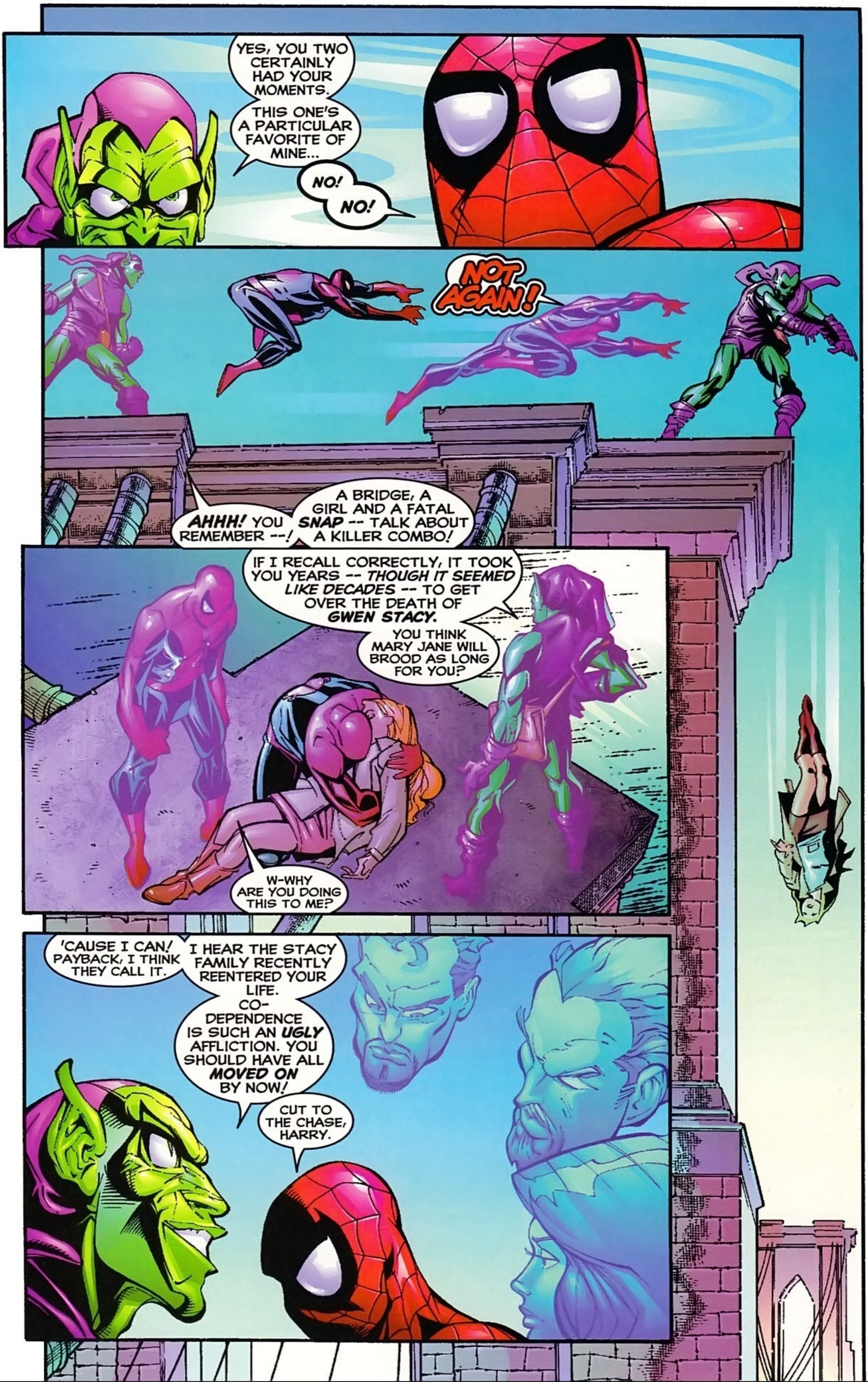
DON'T FATTEN HIM UP TOO MUCH, DEAR! I CAN HARDLY OUT-WRESTLE HIM ***NOW!***

"YOUR FAMILY LIFE WAS JUST TOO ***NICK AT NITE*** FOR WORDS!

"AND...WHAT THE HECK ARE ***WHEATCAKES,*** ANYWAY?!"


THE WAY YOUR LIFE WAS PLAYING OUT, YOU WERE A SURE PICK TO END UP ON A TOWER SOMEDAY.
IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY?
DON'T INTERRUPT! WE'RE JUST GETTING TO THE FUN PART...
"...EVERYTHING CHANGED THE DAY YOU MADE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF A CERTAIN RADIOACTIVE SPIDER.
"INSTEAD OF SUFFERING FROM A NASTY INFECTION LIKE ANY NORMAL PERSON, YOU GAINED SUPER POWERS.
"FIGURING TO CASH IN ON YOUR NEW ABILITIES, YOU DESIGNED A COSTUME --
"-- AND MADE A RUN AT SHOWBIZ.
"THINGS MIGHT HAVE ACTUALLY WORKED OUT --
"-- IF YOU HADN'T IGNORED A CRY FOR HELP TO STOP A FLEEING BURGLAR.
"IN AN IRONIC COINCIDENCE, THAT VERY SAME BURGLAR LATER MURDERED YOUR PRECIOUS UNCLE BEN.
"AND SO, FEELING LIKE THE COMPLETE LOSER YOU ARE, YOU VOWED THAT NO INNOCENT PERSON WOULD EVER AGAIN SUFFER --
"-- BECAUSE OF YOUR NEGLIGENCE!"

OF COURSE, YOU WEREN'T NEARLY AS COMPASSIONATE ABOUT THE NOT-SO-INNOCENT.
A MAN IS KNOWN BY THE COMPANY HE KEEPS!
PEOPLE LIKE THE VULTURE, DOCTOR OCTOPUS, KINGPIN, KRAVEN, THE SCORPION AND ALL THE REST -- HAVE PLENTY OF NASTY THINGS TO SAY ABOUT YOU!
BUT THEY WERE ONLY CANNON FODDER COMPARED TO THE REAL JEWEL IN YOUR ROGUE'S GALLERY!
"I AM, OF COURSE, TALKING ABOUT -- TA DA! -- MY ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER, NORMAN OSBORN, THE ORIGINAL GREEN GOBLIN.
"I'M ALMOST JEALOUS WHEN I THINK OF THE TIME YOU TWO SPENT, BONDING IN ALL THOSE SPECIAL WAYS DAD AND I NEVER COULD."



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SOON ENOUGH, AND THEN COMES THE SURPRISE...
WHERE WAS I? Oh, YES -- DAD! YOU WERE SO ANGRY OVER GWEN THAT YOU DIDN'T LIFT A FINGER TO PREVENT HIS DEATH!
THAT PROVED TO BE A CRITICAL JUNCTION FOR ME.
PUSHED ME RIGHT OVER THE EDGE AND INTO THE FAMILY BUSINESS...SO TO SPEAK!
OF COURSE, THE OSBORNS WEREN'T THE ONLY GOBLINS YOU HAD TO CONTEND WITH.
THE HOBGOBLIN IMMEDIATELY SPRINGS TO MIND...THOUGH I'M STILL CONFUSED AS TO WHO WAS ACTUALLY BENEATH THAT MASK!
SPEAKING OF CONFUSION, I STILL REMEMBER THE DAY I DIED.
YOU WERE INVOLVED AS USUAL, AND SEEMED GENUINELY TOUCHED BY MY PASSING.
WISH I COULD RETURN THE FAVOR, "PAL"!

WHAT'S THE POINT OF REHASHING THE PAST, HARRY?

IT'S *OVER* -- *LIKE US!*

I ASSUME YOU'RE HERE FOR A PURPOSE. *LET'S MOVE ON TO IT!*

PATIENCE, PETEY! I'LL GET TO IT... *EVENTUALLY!*

AS FOR THE *PAST* BEING OVER, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE...

"AFTER ALL, DIDN'T YOU RECENTLY FACE A *CLONE* THAT YOU BELIEVED WAS DEAD?

"I LOVED WATCHING YOU TRY TO FIGURE OUT IF IT WAS *OPEN SEASON* ON BEN REILLY --

"-- *OR PETER PARKER!*

"IT WAS EVEN MORE ENTERTAINING TO SEE YOU FINALLY BURY *AUNT MAY.*

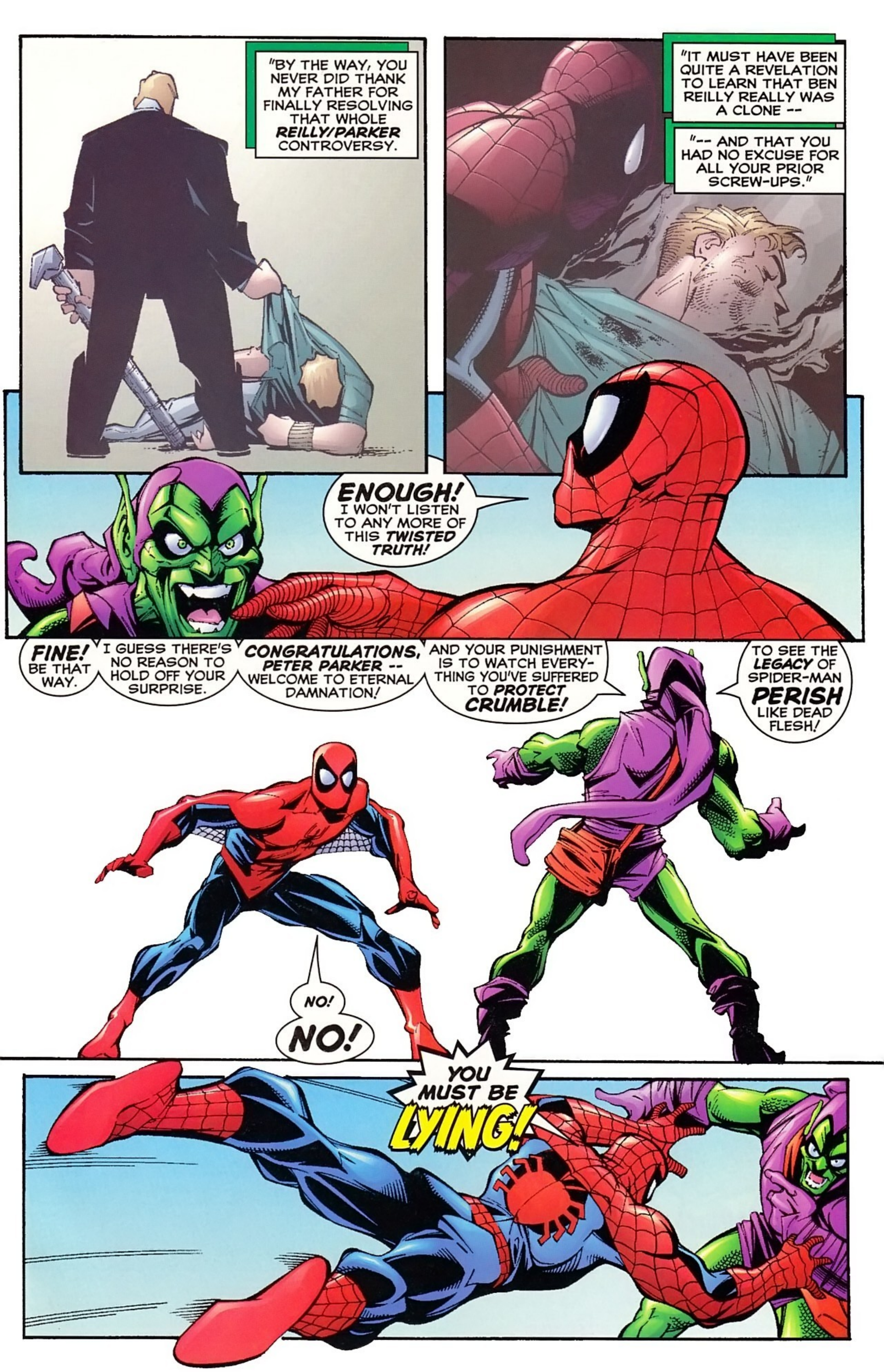
"GOT TO GIVE THE OLD BAT CREDIT -- *SHE LOOKED PRETTY GOOD FOR A WOMAN WHO HAD 387 MASSIVE ATTACKS OVER THE YEARS.*

"AND THEN, JUST TO STICK IT TO YOU WHILE YOU WERE REALLY DOWN, *DAD* POPPED BACK INTO YOUR LIFE.

"A *BAT GLIDER* THROUGH THE HEART?

"HA!

"YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN NORMAN OSBORN WOULDN'T BE DETERRED BY A LITTLE THING LIKE *DEATH."*


"BY THE WAY, YOU NEVER DID THANK MY FATHER FOR FINALLY RESOLVING THAT WHOLE REILLY/PARKER CONTROVERSY.
"IT MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE A REVELATION TO LEARN THAT BEN REILLY REALLY WAS A CLONE --
"-- AND THAT YOU HAD NO EXCUSE FOR ALL YOUR PRIOR SCREW-UPS."
ENOUGH! I WON'T LISTEN TO ANY MORE OF THIS TWISTED TRUTH!
FINE! BE THAT WAY.
I GUESS THERE'S NO REASON TO HOLD OFF YOUR SURPRISE.
CONGRATULATIONS, PETER PARKER -- WELCOME TO ETERNAL DAMNATION!
AND YOUR PUNISHMENT IS TO WATCH EVERY-THING YOU'VE SUFFERED TO PROTECT CRUMBLE!
TO SEE THE LEGACY OF SPIDER-MAN PERISH LIKE DEAD FLESH!
NO! NO!
YOU MUST BE LYING!

OF COURSE! I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED IT EARLIER!
I'M NOT REALLY DEAD. THIS IS ALL SOME CAREFULLY-CONSTRUCTED ILLUSION -- PROBABLY THE WORK OF MYSTERIO OR YOUR FATHER!
NOT THIS TIME, PETEY!
SORRY!
I KNOW IT MUST BURN YOU TO KNOW YOU'VE WASTED YOUR LIFE, ENDANGERED YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. ALL FOR WHAT?
TO BE REMEMBERED IN THE PAGES OF A BIASED NEWS-PAPER? TO BE THE HERO WHO COULDN'T CUT IT AS AN AVENGER?
WRONG!
I'VE LAID EVERYTHING ON THE LINE TO DO WHAT I'VE BELIEVED TO BE RIGHT AND FAIR, NO MATTER THE PERSONAL CONSEQUENCE!

YOU'VE TRIED TO REDUCE MY ENTIRE LIFE TO A SIMPLE SERIES OF EVENTS -- AS IF THEY WERE WITHOUT MEANING OR CONTEXT!
STOP WHINING!
IT'S A BITTER PILL, PETER! YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST GUY TO REALIZE HE'S WASTED HIS ENTIRE--
HEY! WHO CUED THE FOG?

WHERE ARE WE?
THIS CHANGE OF LOCALE WASN'T IN MY COPY OF THE SCRIPT.

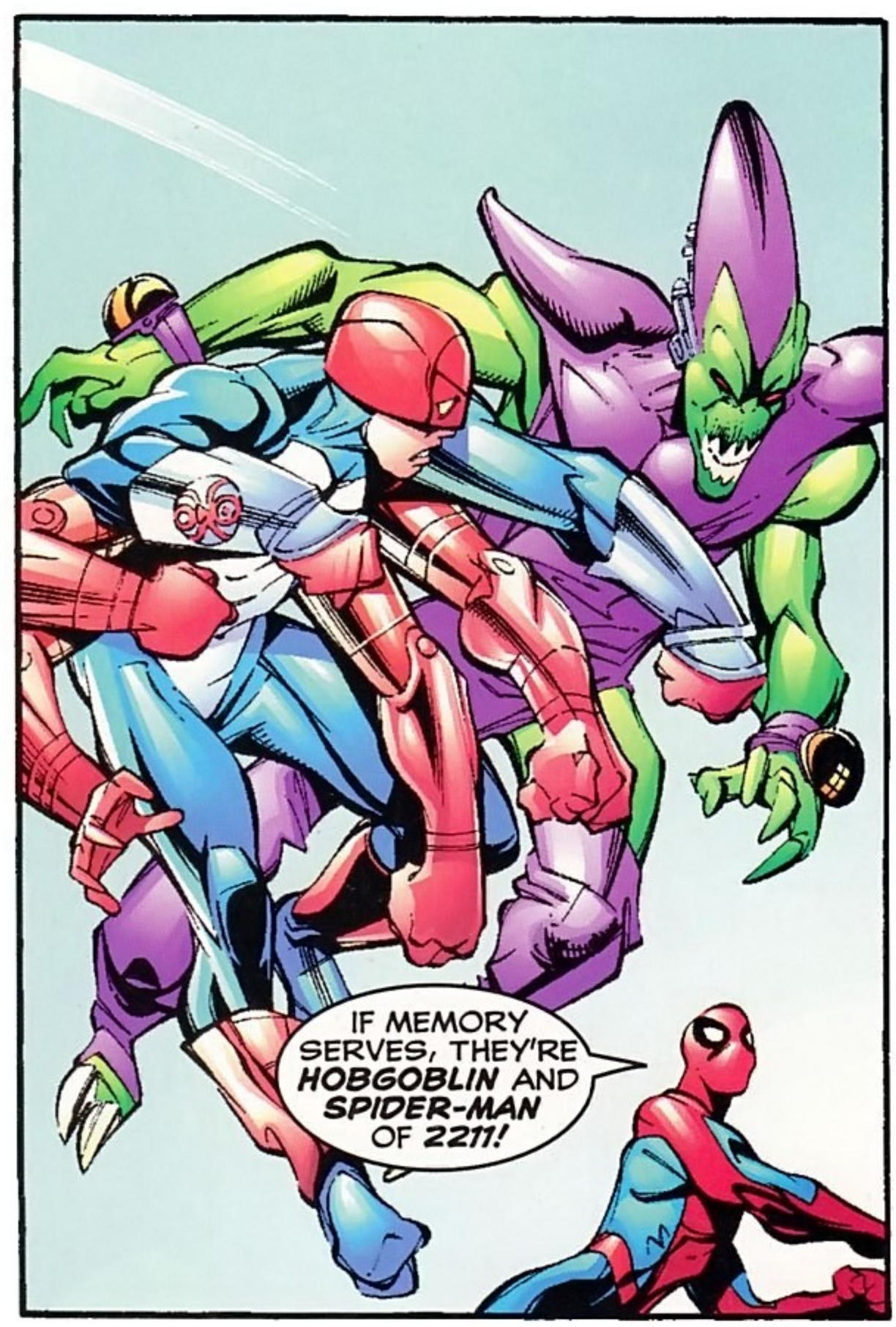
SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE LOOKS FAMILIAR.
OF COURSE!
I KNOW THIS PLACE!

WE'RE IN THE YEAR 2099.
CHECK OUT THIS ERA'S WEB-SWINGER --
-- AND THEN REMIND ME HOW I SQUANDERED MY LIFE.

DON'T SLIP INTO GLOAT MODE JUST YET, WEBS.
LOOKS LIKE THE OSBORN INFLUENCE IS ALSO HERE.

Y'KNOW THERE'S NO REASON FOR THEM TO HOG ALL THE FUN --!
HARRY -- NO!
WE'RE BOTH DEAD, REMEMBER? IT NO LONGER MAKES SENSE FOR US TO FIGHT!
IT CERTAINLY DOES, PETER!

WE'RE PART OF A GRAND TRADITION THAT'S DESTINED TO CONTINUE THROUGH THE CENTURIES, GOOD VS. EVIL LIGHT AGAINST -- HEY! WHO ARE THESE CLOWNS?


IF MEMORY SERVES, THEY'RE HOBGOBLIN AND SPIDER-MAN OF 2211!

Y-YOU'RE *KIDDING*, RIGHT?

SOME THINGS JUST DON'T FADE AWAY, HARRY.

ALL THESE *GREEN GOBLINS* --

-- AND *HOBGOBLINS* --

-- CAN'T DESTROY *ONE* MEASLY SPIDER-"MAN"?!

"GUESS NOT GOBLIN. AS LONG AS THERE'RE VILLAINS, THERE'LL ALWAYS BE HEROES."

"YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, IT'S THE ETERNAL BATTLE!"

BAD ENOUGH WE'RE DOOMED TO REPEAT THE *PAST* --

-- BUT OUR *FUTURE* IS FILLED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EVIL TO TRIUMPH!

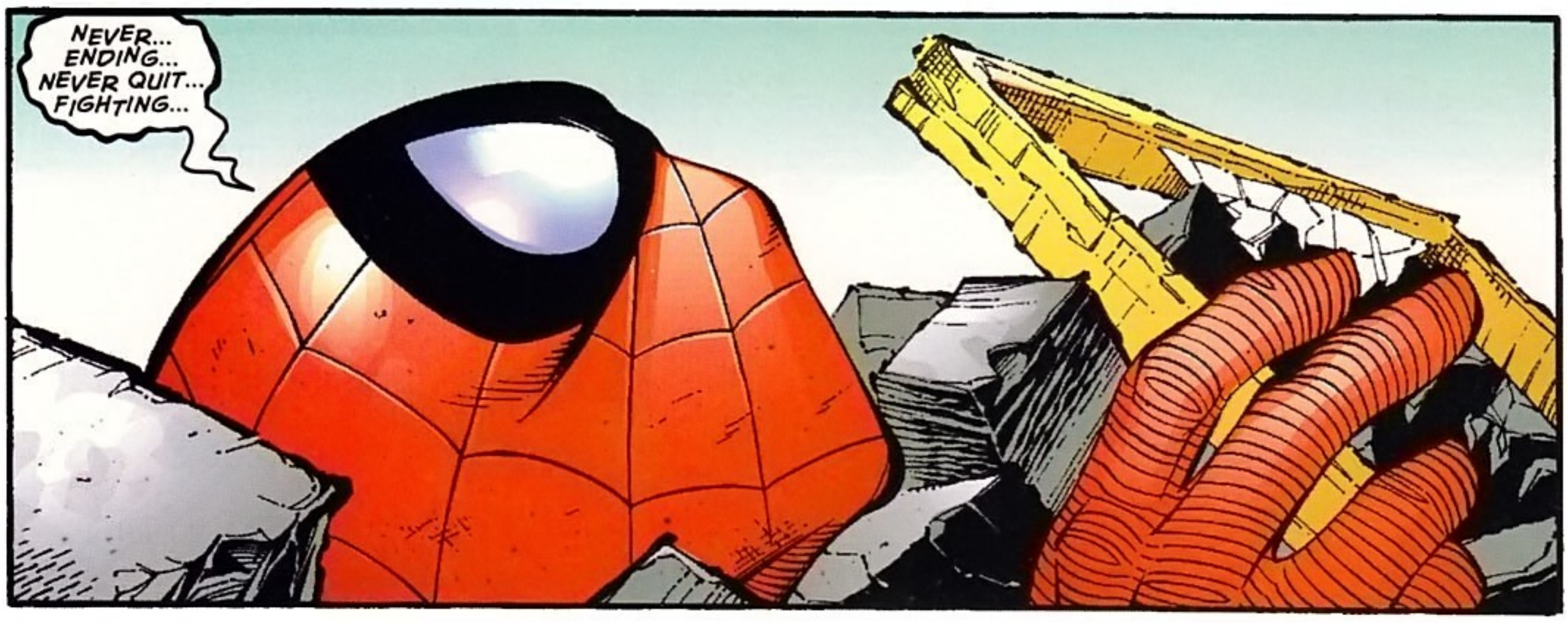
THIS CAN'T GO ON FOREVER!

IT WILL *END* SOMETIME! SPIDER-MAN WILL BE NO MORE!

IT'S ONLY A CASE OF... *WHEN?*

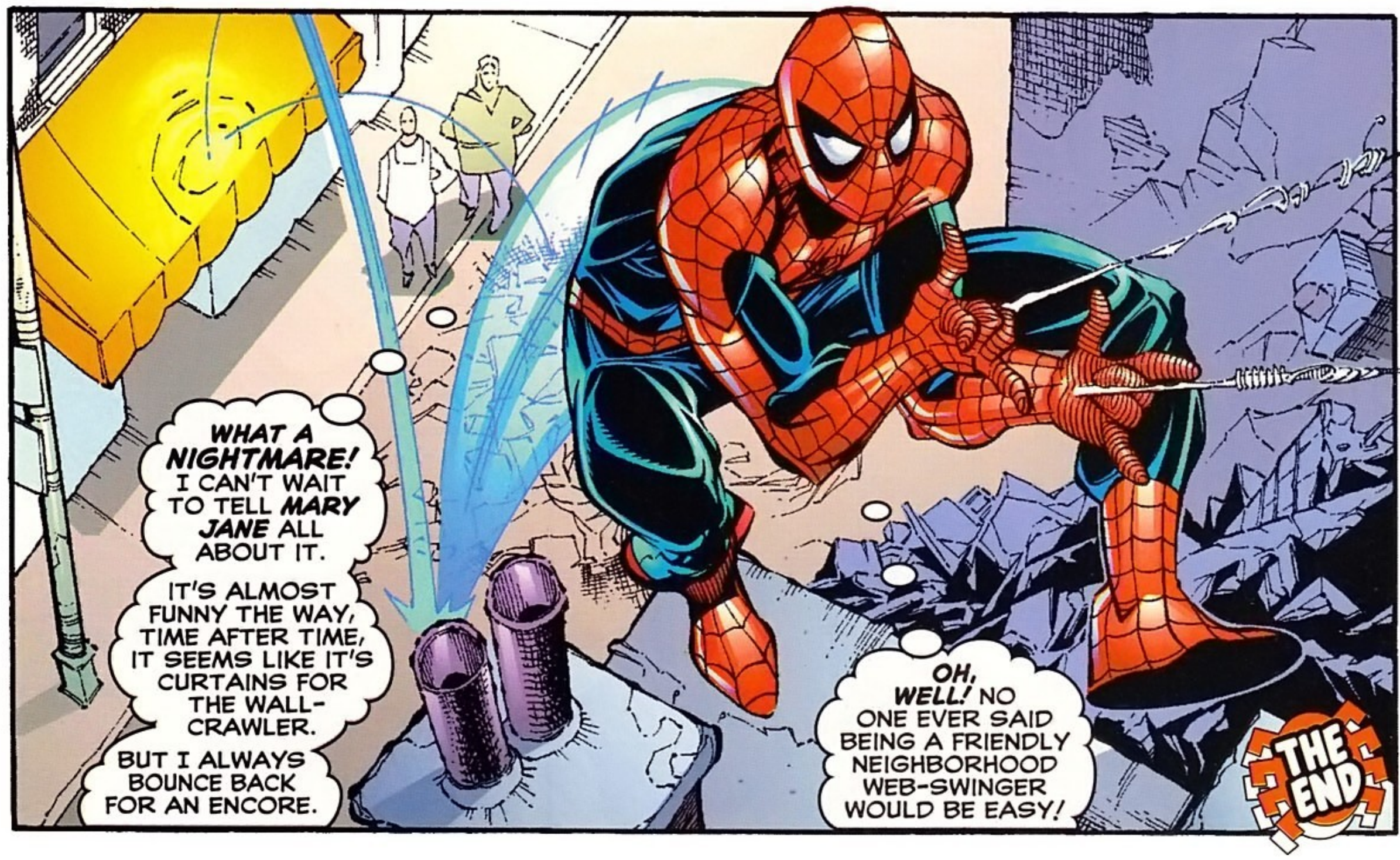
WHEN?!

WHEN?!


NEVER... ENDING... NEVER QUIT... FIGHTING...

YOU OKAY, WEBHEAD?
HAD US REAL WORRIED FOR A MINUTE THERE --
-- BUT THEN WE HEARD YA MUMBLING TO YOURSELF!

I... I FEEL FINE.
GREAT, IN FACT!
WHEW! I MUST HAVE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS FOR A MINUTE OR TWO... BUT I'M ALL RIGHT NOW!


WHAT A NIGHTMARE! I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL MARY JANE ALL ABOUT IT.
IT'S ALMOST FUNNY THE WAY, TIME AFTER TIME, IT SEEMS LIKE IT'S CURTAINS FOR THE WALL-CRAWLER.
BUT I ALWAYS BOUNCE BACK FOR AN ENCORE.
OH, WELL! NO ONE EVER SAID BEING A FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD WEB-SWINGER WOULD BE EASY!
THE END